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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 150043

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: VOTING INSTRUCTION ON CUBA EMBARGO RESOLUTION

¶1. This is an action request. USUN is instructed to vote against the resolution on the Necessity of Ending the Economic, Commercial and Financial Embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, to be considered by the UN General Assembly on October 30, drawing on the points in para 2 for use in the discussion and the explanation of vote, and drawing on points in para 3 in exercising the right of reply.

¶2. Begin Points:

-- As in years past, the United States rises to point out the fundamental fact that the United States' exercise of its sovereign right to decide whether and to what extent to trade with another government is a bilateral issue, and as such, should not come before

the General Assembly. We note that many other states or regional groups have from time to time determined to restrict transactions with others for a variety of reasons. They should consider whether this resolution sets a precedent they would find comfortable in other contexts.

-- Cuba's problems derive not from any decision of the United States, but from the embargo on freedom that the Cuban regime has imposed on its own people.

-- The Cuban government denies its people information, access to the outside world, the right to travel, and the opportunities for Cubans to better their lives economically.

-- We maintain our policy of directing aid and trade into the hands of the Cuban people to break the absolute control that the Cuban regime holds over the resources that the Cuban people need.

-- According to the Cuban Government's own trade statistics, the United States has exported nearly \$2 billion in agricultural, medical, and humanitarian goods to Cuba since 2002. We are one of Cuba's largest suppliers of food, one of Cuba's largest suppliers of imports, and one of Cuba's largest trading partners. In 2006 alone we authorized the provision of over \$270 million of food and medicines by private citizens and organizations, making the American people the largest providers of humanitarian aid to the Cuban people in the world.

-- Now more than ever, we invite the member states considering this resolution to reject the arguments of the Cuban government and focus on effecting a transition in Cuba that would restore its people's fundamental rights.

-- We also encourage member states and NGOs to promote free and unfettered access to the internet in Cuba by all Cubans, to support independent libraries and journalists, and to broaden educational

opportunities for all Cuban youth, not just a privileged few.

-- Finally, we call on the international community to join together in demanding that the Cuban government unconditionally release all political prisoners as the essential step in beginning a process that restores to the Cuban people their basic human rights.

-- It is long past time that the Cuban people enjoy the blessings of economic and political freedom. Instead of voting in favor of this resolution condemning the U.S. for declining to engage in unrestricted financial transactions with a regime that deprives its own people of their fundamental human rights that this body is charged with protecting, we urge member states to oppose this resolution and condemn the Cuban government's internal embargo on freedom, which is the real cause of the suffering of the Cuban people.

13. Begin points for Right of Reply

-- This resolution inaccurately blames the U.S. for the hardships of the Cuban people, while exonerating the Cuban Government's own policies, which

STATE 00150043 002 OF 002

deny the rights of the Cuban people to a fair wage for their labor, to own a business, or to otherwise exercise their rights in the marketplace.

-- This resolution also inaccurately claims that the U.S. embargo is a violation of freedom of navigation - a blockade. In fact, the U.S. policy of limiting bilateral transactions with the Cuban regime does not prevent the rest of the world from trading with Cuba or providing Cuba with access to food or medicine.

-- Most seriously, this resolution does not refer to the embargo on freedom that the Cuban regime has imposed on its own people, which even prevents UN and other international human rights organizations from traveling to Cuba and meeting freely with the Cuban people.

End Points
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